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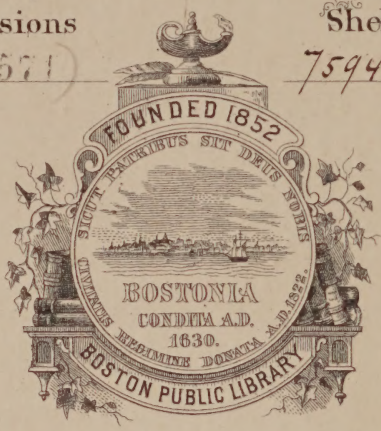

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His Excell.y Edward Everett.

AN ACCOUNT

OF

DUMMER ACADEMY,

TOGETHER WITH A STATEMENT

OF THE

ALTERATIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS,

ABOUT TO BE MADE,

BY THE TRUSTEES.

BOSTON:
PRESS OF THE BOSTON COURIER.
1837.

Wm Smith, Esq.
Aug. 2. 1867.

TRUSTEES.

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INSTRUCTERS.

NEHEMIAH CLEAVELAND, PRINCIPAL.
_____, _____, } Teacher of English Department.

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Aug 26, 1791

DUMMER ACADEMY.

THE Trustees of Dummer Academy, having resolved to make some important improvements in that venerable seminary, wish to lay its condition and claims to patronage before the public.

It is the oldest school for instruction in the learned languages in New-England. It was made a public seminary by an Act of Incorporation of the Legislature of Massachusetts, October 3, 1782, in consequence of a legacy left by his Honor, William Dummer, who died in Boston, October 10, 1761. Gov. Dummer had a farm and country seat in Byfield, Massachusetts, both of which he left as a munificent donation for the foundation of a public school for the instruction of youth in the learned languages. Several gentlemen, moved by the desire of carrying the benevolent donor's intention into effectual operation, procured an act of incorporation for a grammar school or academy—the only one then in the State. They elected the famous Master Moody, as the Principal; and for a long time the seminary flourished under his superintendence.

Some of our most distinguished men, both in church and state, have been educated in this venerable school.

Of late, however, it has suffered some of that vicissitude, which is the lot of all sublunary things. Though its funds are respectable, its situation pleasant, and its teachers have been skillful and diligent, yet, owing to the growing institutions of our country, and the multiplied seminaries around us, it has not continued to hold that exclusive pre-eminence, which it once attained. We mean not to indulge in the language of despondency or complaint. The institution has generally deserved and received a respectable share of the public patronage. But, as academies and schools have greatly multiplied recently, and the objects of education have become more complex, this school has been thrown, in a comparative sense, somewhat into the shade. It is, perhaps, a fault of our republican propensities, in a restless pursuit after novelties, to forsake the old paths, even when most safe, and to confound the fluctuations of innovation with the progressions of improvement.

Dummer Academy has been principally a classical school; its main object has been to teach the dead languages, and to fit its pupils for entrance into our colleges. In this respect, it is believed that, under a series of competent instructers, it has yielded to no school in our land, in point of pre-eminence. It is only necessary to mention the names of Moody, (who has been called the American Busby,) Allen, Abott,

and Adams, with several others, to show that this school was competent to attain all it professed, and to substantiate its highest claims to the public favor. If it has suffered any eclipse, it has only been collateral with the eclipse of literature, distinctively so called, in an age when the material sciences are engaging a large share (perhaps it should be said too large,) of the popular attention.

Moved by these circumstances, the Trustees were desirous to accommodate the school somewhat more to the wants and spirit of the age, without departing, if possible, from those fundamental principles, on which all its past merit has rested. At their annual meeting, in the autumn of 1836, two Committees were chosen; one, to inquire what modification and enlargement could be made in the course of instruction in the Academy, and the other, (which was collateral to the first Committee, and embracing another part of the same design,) were directed to consider the expediency of erecting or purchasing a house for the accommodation of boarders; i. e. that most of the pupils might be under the constant superintendence of one of the teachers. Both these Committees made reports; and, in consequence, the Trustees resolved, unanimously, to enlarge their establishment; to have two departments under two instructers—the one, in which the classical studies should continue to be taught, under the care of the Principal, Nehemiah Cleaveland, Esq., and another department, embracing the English language and

the Sciences, under a new teacher, to be chosen hereafter by the Trustees.

The venerable mansion-house of Gov. Dummer is still standing, and in good repair. It is on a corner of that beautiful farm, which he gave for the support of the school, situated in the northern part of Essex County, in Massachusetts; is surrounded by a garden and trees; is spacious and convenient, and is excellently adapted to be a boarding-house for the pupils. The intention now is, that, in the coming year, (Aug. 1837,) the two departments shall go into operation; the teacher of the English department shall take this mansion as his residence, and to board the scholars; and that the Principal shall occupy the new house, which is now in the process of building, directly in the the vicinity of the Academy; and that the other building, where the school has been kept and which is spacious and convenient, shall be devoted each story to each of the departments.

It need not be said to those, who have ever passed by this retired and rural scene, how well it is situated for the purposes of education. It is in a peaceful village, where nothing is found to corrupt the morals; it is on one of the great post roads leading from Newburyport to Boston, and is of easy access, at a convenient distance from the city. No tavern, no public courts, no assemblages of vice or haunts of dissipation are found in the neighborhood. The pupil dwells among the scenes of nature, and is incited by

the stillness of her beauties to study and improvement. He finds every thing to promote his health and to protect his morals; a walk of four miles brings him to Newburyport, and the stages every day pass his residence. Two beautiful streams, Parker river and a brook that runs between Newbury and Rowley, inclose his dwelling on the north and south, and in summer invite him to the healthful exercise of bathing. Public worship is performed every Sabbath, at a short distance, in the Byfield meeting-house, where seats are provided for the scholars. In short, the Trustees are determined to spare no exertions to make this school as excellent, as they are sure its site is convenient; to make it what its funds require, and its munificent donor designed—among the very first in our land.

Impressed with these views, the Trustees have supposed that some alteration in the course of the studies might tend to the prosperity and usefulness of the school. They are aware that the will of Gov. Dummer directs that his bequest shall be appropriated to erecting "a grammar school-house," and to the supporting of "a grammar school;" and they suppose, in the language of the day, that the phrase *a grammar school*, designated a school in which the Latin and Greek languages were chiefly taught. They also feel the inconvenience of imposing a too complex task on a single teacher. But they also conceive that the change of time requires, in order to execute the *spirit* of the donor's design, and the act of incorporation, that

the character of the school should be made more comprehensive. In former days, the learned languages were the great objects of knowledge. Chemistry, Geology, Astronomy, the Science of Political Economy, were comparatively unknown. The more practical branches of knowledge have since been rising in importance ; and many of our youth go to Academies, not to fit themselves to be profound proficients in one or the other of the three learned professions, but to prepare themselves for usefulness in common life. The age has multiplied its demands, and our colleges themselves begin to partake of its miscellaneous character.

The Trustees, therefore, have determined that there shall be, in Dummer Academy, a settled course of study established by their authority, to be completed in three years ; that the Academy shall comprise two departments ; in one, those studies shall be taught which are preparatory to admission into college ; and, in the OTHER, the branches of learning essential to a good English education. The terms of admission to be, a good moral character and studious habits ; for admission into the department preparatory for college, they shall be well instructed in reading, spelling, Colburn's First Lessons, and the elements of Geography ; into the other department, they shall be well instructed in reading and spelling, in Colburn's First Lessons, or something equivalent, Parker's First Part of English Grammar, and Woodbridge's Rudiments of Geography, or studies equivalent. Students in each department

may be admitted to any advanced standing in the three years' course, for which, on examination, they are found qualified. The times of admission to be at the commencement of the Academic year, or the beginning of each term. But in either department, at other times, by special permission of the Trustees.

The Academic Year.

The Academic Year will begin on Wednesday, immediately preceding the Commencement at Cambridge College.* There will be three terms and three vacations. The first vacation, as aforesaid, from the Wednesday immediately preceding the commencement at Cambridge College, *three weeks ;* the second, from the Wednesday preceding the 25th of December, *two weeks ;* and the third, from the last Wednesday in April, *three weeks.*

The Studies.

The studies in each department shall be arranged as follows :—

I. *English Department.*

First Year. English Grammar, Arithmetic, Algebra, Geography, Political Class Book, Chirography.

Second Year. Geometry, History, Logic, Rhetoric, English Composition and Declamation.

Third Year. Chemistry, Natural Philosophy, Astronomy, Moral and Intellectual Philosophy, Evidences

* Commencement at Cambridge is on the last Wednesday in August.

of Christianity and Natural Theology, English composition and Declamation.

II. *Classical Department.*

In the other department the course of studies will be—

The First Year—Latin Grammar, Jacob's Latin Reader, Cæsar's Commentaries, Sallust, Reading and Making Latin, Ancient and Modern Geography, Roman Antiquities, Arithmetic.

Second Year—Reading and Making Latin, Sallust, Virgil's Æneid, Cicero's Orations, Fisk's Greek Grammar, Jacob's Greek Reader, Arithmetic, and English Grammar.

Third Year—Same Latin and Greek Authors as before, Virgil's Bucolics and Georgics, English Grammar, Declamation, Exercises in Latin and English translations, Composition, Algebra.

Advanced Class.

The students who may choose to remain after completing the usual course of preparation for college, with the design of entering college in advanced standing, or to obtain a better knowledge of the classics, will constitute an advanced class.

Examinations.

There will be an examination of the school on the last day of each term, by a committee of five ; and by

the whole board at the close of the year; the committee of the board to be notified by the Secretary of the time of each examination, three days at least before its approach, and the Committee will make a written statement to the Trustees of the state of the school.

Price of Tuition.

The price of tuition shall be five dollars for each term; but the Trustees may remit the tuition to indigent students.

The Library.

There is a valuable library connected with this seminary, containing between two and three hundred volumes, of the best English classics and translations, well-bound and in good order, principally the donation of Gov. Dummer—being his private library. This library is open to the use of the students, with no other expense than repairing any damages the books may incur in their hands. But as many students find little time for miscellaneous reading, it is designed to add some books to assist them in their regular studies. Such as a large Latin and Greek Lexicon, a good Atlas, Malte Brun's Geography, &c.

The Teacher.

Our present teacher is Nehemiah Cleaveland, Esq. of whom the Committee deem it due to him and the public to say, that, after sixteen years experience of his diligent and successful labor, he has their confi-

dence, and they can unhesitatingly recommend him to the confidence of the public. They cordially approve of his discipline and skill in the languages. He is to take the classical department. The other teacher is yet to be chosen.

Conclusion.

The condition and claims of this ancient school are now laid before the public. The Trustees cannot but indulge the hope and belief, that the just reputation of this ancient seminary, its beautiful situation, its large endowments, the designs of its benevolent founder, the eminent men whom it has sent forth into the world, and the healthful power which it still retains, justify us in incurring some hazards and expenses, to make it more extensively useful. An important trust is committed to our hands. We stand between the living and the dead,—the channel of the benevolence of former ages to the rising generation. May the precious plant not wither in our hands; may we have divine wisdom to direct us; may we faithfully execute our task; may we partake of the spirit of Dummer and his associates: Then shall this seminary, founded with the prayers and watered by the tears of our pious fathers, continue to be *like a tree planted at the division of waters, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.*

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